

2

STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
STANFORD MEDICAL CENTER  
300 PASTEUR DRIVE, PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA 94304

DEPARTMENT OF GENETICS  
Professor Joshua Lederberg

October 9, 1967

Dear Dr. Kass--

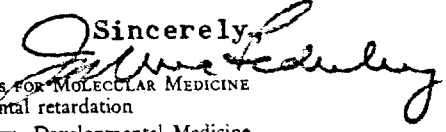
If I did not share your concerns, I would hardly waste my time and effort in a weekly column intended for a broadening of the frame of political debate to include fundamental issues of human biology. Within the format of a weekly column, which appears recurrently, there are limitations and opportunities quite different from more scholarly journals. Were I to be excessively stressful, week after week, I think I would quickly lose my readership.

As you will see (and I hope might have noted from the past history of my column) I am very much exercised about the confrontations for wise and sober choice that lie ahead. I am particularly concerned that we do not confuse rational choice with acquiescence in familiar experience.

Why is biological intervention called 'tampering' as it almost always is, and not education, good nutrition and so on? I think mainly because it is just less familiar. We ought to have a humane interest in all these ways of tampering with individual development!

Columns being what they are, it will take me some few weeks to develop my ideas on this subject. I hope you will be quite uninhibited about continuing the debate on substantive as well as stylistic issues at that time. It is always gratifying to know that someone is reading 'out there'.

Sincerely,

  
LT. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY, JR. LABORATORIES FOR MOLECULAR MEDICINE  
dedicated to the study of mental retardation  
Molecular Biology Heredity Neurobiology Developmental Medicine

5511 A Oak Place  
Bethesda, Md. 20834  
October 4, 1967